



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

**REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK**

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June 17, 2002

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR  
Chief Deputy/Chief of Staff

FROM: Conny B. McCormack, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

**CALIFORNIA REGISTRARS ISSUE POSITION PAPER PREDICTING PROBLEMS IN FUTURE ELECTIONS - PROPOSE LEGISLATIVE SOLUTIONS**

Registrars statewide experienced unprecedented problems administering the March 5, 2002 Primary Election<sup>1</sup>. Post-election analysis conducted by the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) determined the major culprit was a spate of complex, recently enacted state election laws that confuse pollworkers and voters alike and raise concerns that future elections may no longer be able to be conducted within an acceptable level of error.

This finding was reflected in a position paper recently issued by the CACEO (copy attached) that opens with the statement "elections in California are at risk of collapsing under the weight of their own complexity." The paper makes several recommendations for state legislative action that would simplify the election process, expand the pollworker base and stabilize polling sites. A committee of CACEO members, including myself, have been discussing this position paper in meetings with state legislators, civic leaders and the media in an effort to focus attention on the problems now inherent in election administration.

A write-up describing the CACEO position paper was featured in the most current issue of the national election administration newsletter *Election Administration Reports* (copy attached).

I hope that you will review the CACEO position paper which expands upon several of the issues contained in my recent report on the March 5, 2002 Primary Election requested by your Board entitled "Problems, Solutions and Resources Needed for Improvement." If you have questions, please call me.

Attachment

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<sup>1</sup> Problems included pollworker recruitment and "no shows" impacting timely opening of polling places, mistakes issuing wrong ballots due to complex "Modified Closed Primary" rules, some eligible voters not listed on precinct rosters due to shortened voter registration deadline from 29 to 15 days before each election, high number/percentage of changes in assigned polling places due to redistricting, sample ballot printing/delivery delays and errors (and exponential cost increases) due to doubling the number of ballot combinations as a result of redistricting, etc.